

REMARKS

Claims 17 to 22 are pending in the application, of which Claims 17, 19, 21, and 22 are independent. Reconsideration and further examination are respectfully requested.

Claim 11 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. 6,956,665 (Miyahara) further in view of U.S. 6,341,978 (Owa). Claims 12 and 15 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Miyahara, Owa further in view of U.S. 2002/0131080 (Enomoto). Reconsideration and withdrawal of these rejections are respectfully requested.

The present invention concerns generating one or more print jobs for one or more printers based on a single print order. In one aspect of the invention, when the print order does not indicate color printing, a plurality of print jobs are generated and are respectively assigned to a plurality of print devices having a designated type. However, when the print order indicates color printing, a single print job for the print order is generated and assigned to a single print device having a designated type. According to the present invention, it is possible to prevent printing of documents having mismatched color characteristics as only one print device is used when color printing while at the same time, it is possible to shorten a print time for printing of black and white documents by using a plurality of print devices when not color printing.

Turning to specific claim language, new independent Claim 17 is directed to a print system comprising a print control apparatus and a plurality of print devices in a same type, wherein the print control apparatus and the plurality of print devices are connected with each other, the print control apparatus includes: an acquiring unit configured to acquire a type of print device designated in a print order; a judging unit configured to judge whether or not the print order indicates color printing; and an assigning unit configured to assign a plurality of print jobs

included in the print order to a plurality of print devices of the type acquired by the acquiring unit, dispersively, when the judging unit judges that the print order does not indicate color printing, and to assign the plurality of print jobs included in the print order to a print device of a plurality of print devices of the type acquired by said acquiring unit, together, when the judging unit judges that the print order indicates color printing, and each of said plurality of print devices comprising: a print processing unit configured to perform print processing for the print jobs assigned by the assigning unit of the print control apparatus.

In contrast to the present claims, Miyahara discloses that when pages for monochrome printing and pages for color printings coexist in a single print job, the pages for color printing are first printed by a color copying machine 105 and thereafter the pages for monochrome printing are printed by a BW (black-and-white) digital copying machine 106. Therefore, Miyahara discloses separating a single print job having mixed color and black-and-white printing needs, and then assigning the color pages to be printed on a single fixed color copier while assigning the black-and-white pages to a single fixed black-and-white digital copying machine. However, Miyahara fails to disclose or suggest assigning a plurality of print jobs included in a print order to a plurality of print devices of an acquired type, dispersively, when it is judged that the print order does not indicate color printing, and assigning the plurality of print jobs included in the print order to a print device of a plurality of print devices of the acquired type, together, when it is judged that the print order indicates color printing, as featured in the present claims.

The Office Action contends that Owa discloses determining a plurality of devices or a single device depending on a designated type. However, Owa only discloses selection of an optimum printer having the designated type which includes a plurality of conditions to be

matched from a plurality of printers. However, Owa fails to disclose or suggest that monochromatic print jobs are assigned to a plurality of printers depending on the designated type, dispersively, or that color print jobs are assigned to only one printer selected from a plurality of printers depending on the designated type, together, as featured in the present claims.

In light of the deficiencies of Miyahara and Owa as discussed above, Applicants submit independent Claim 17 is in condition for allowance and respectfully request same.

Independent Claims 19, 21, and 22 are directed to an apparatus, a method and a computer-readable storage medium, respectively, substantially in accordance with the system of Claim 17. Accordingly, Applicants submit that Claims 19, 21, and 22 are also in condition for allowance and respectfully request same.

The other pending claims in this application are each dependent from the independent claims discussed above and are therefore believed allowable for at least the same reasons. Because each dependent claim is also deemed to define an additional aspect of the invention, however, the individual consideration of each on its own merits is respectfully requested.

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, the entire application is believed to be in condition for allowance, and such action is respectfully requested at the Examiner's earliest convenience.

CONCLUSION

No claim fees are believed due; however, should it be determined that additional claim fees are required, the Director is hereby authorized to charge such fees to Deposit Account 06-1205.

Applicants' undersigned attorney may be reached in our Costa Mesa, CA office at (714) 540-8700. All correspondence should continue to be directed to our below-listed address.

Respectfully submitted,

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